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The Church of England in Canada.

EXTRACTS FROM THE FIRST CHARGE OF

His Grace the Late Archbishop Sweatman

DELIVERED AT TORONTO, JUNE 10, 1879

CALLED BY HIM

"MY DECLARATION OF FAITH"

AND BY EVANGELICALS

"OUR MAGNA CHARTA"



A true standard set for all Evangelical Church-
men and Women throughout the Dominion of
Canada.



*"Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man
take thy crown."*

Rev. 3:11.

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It is not well that the remembrance of this statesmanlike utterance should pass away. Its calm, judicious, uncompromising words, containing the promise and guarantee of times of refreshing, were the fitting beginning of an episcopate of over thirty years' duration, in which much of good was wrought for our Church.

The needs of the present day call for a diligent reconsideration of this document, hailed by Evangelical Churchmen when delivered as their Magna Charta. It should be studied and spread broadcast throughout our Dominion. Let not the good that these words of wisdom accomplished, when delivered, be forgotten at a period when they are as much wanted as when they were first uttered.

1.—GOD'S RULE IS DIVERSITY, NOT UNIFORMITY.

“That there should be divergences of opinion on points of doctrine and practice among those who are yet sincere sons of the Church of England, we must concede to be inevitable and allowable—inevitable, since it has pleased God to endow the human mind with so wide a diversity in its views of truth and its processes of thought; and allowable, because the authoritative standards of our Church have been wisely framed with a sufficient comprehensiveness of range as to their construction to embrace such diversity.

“Unity is, without doubt, a necessary mark of the true Church of Christ—may we strive with all our hearts to attain to it!—but I do not believe that to realize that unity for which He prayed and taught us to pray, it is necessary that we should wait until our own visionary dream of uniformity is fulfilled. Indeed, a study of all God's works in nature goes to demonstrate that not uniformity, but diversity, is His rule—in the works of man it is the latter feature that is recognized as pleasing; the former is, by common consent, avoided as offensive to instinctive taste; and we feel that the truest, most complete unity is that which is attained by the harmonizing of diversities into a consistent, agreeing whole.”

2.—THERE ARE PARTIES, AND EACH HAS THE RIGHT TO EXIST.

“It is fruitless for us to deny, brethren, it would be unworthy for us to apologize, that there are parties in the Church. I trust we have learned enough wisdom from the past frankly to accept the position; and that each party is willing honourably to concede to the other the right to exist and to claim a just recognition—so long, of course, as its doctrines and usages are within the legitimate limits of a fair and honest interpretation of the formularies acknowledged by both. Constituted thus, as our Church is, he could never be a true Bishop of the Church who allowed himself to be the Bishop of a party.”

3.—NO COMPROMISE—BUT TOLERANCE.

“I am compelled, of necessity, to tread upon dangerous ground; and feel the greater need that therefore is for pre-

caution in guarding myself against misconstruction. I am not advocating compromise, which is a weak and futile expedient for evading difficulties, but tolerance. I am not contemplating a surrender of principles, which would be a betrayal of the truth; but I do propose to myself, as the essential of a good, an ideal Bishop, a heart large enough to embrace within its sympathies, and a mind unbiased enough to honour with its confidence all godly, sincere, earnest Churchmen, though they may belong to different schools of thought; an impartiality that will mete out to each his due, uninfluenced by motives of party; a tenderness in judging and a gentleness of dealing that is ready to make an allowance for errors that are of the head only, and a firmness of hand that will hold the reins of power evenly with a strict justice that is undeviating, and will steer a straight course of equity and right, without fear or favour."

4.—HOLDS WITH PROTESTANTISM AND AGAINST SACREDOTALISM.

"And here, again, let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to imply that a Bishop has no right to have any opinions of his own; that his views must be colourless; that he must agree with everything and anything with a kind of latitudinarian indifferentism; that his mind must be emasculated of vigorous activity, and divested of all independence and individuality.

"I claim that I hold views; and views of a very distinct character—views which I prize most highly, which are to me as the apple of the eye, and which I would refuse to part with at the price of any place of dignity in the Church. I hold most strongly the Protestant Evangelical views of our Reformed Church, as opposed to the Sacredotal and Sacramentarian views which are characteristic of Romanism."

5. DOES NOT APOLOGIZE FOR THE REFORMATION.

"There are those who have grown to be ashamed of the honest name of Protestant, and think it necessary to speak quite apologetically of the Reformation. But, I would ask, what existence have we as a Church duly constituted, with a polity of its own, with prescribed liturgy and authorized standards, except through the Reformation? It is true that

we trace back the independent autonomy of our branch of the Church Catholic far beyond that struggle which was as the throes of a second birth; beyond its subjection to the Papal primacy; beyond the accession to it of the Saxon converts of Augustine, and its consequent first connection with the See of Rome, back through the persecutions and depressions of the British Christians, who also had their Bishops and their liturgy, to the very Apostolic age."

6—OUR CHURCH REFORMED FROM THE ERRORS, IDOLATRIES AND SUPERSTITIOUS CEREMONIES OF ROME.

"Our Church of England dates from thence, and not from the Reformation; the separation from Rome was not a schism from the body, but a self-emancipation from an imposed yoke, a return to original independence; the renunciation of the errors, the idolatries, the superstitious ceremonies of Rome was the purging of the ancient Church from the accretions of defilement, through the mediæval period, that had dimmed her light and sullied her purity. And therefore, although with just pride we claim for our Church that she is no new Church, but the oldest of Churches, cleansed, remodelled and restored nearer to the pristine purity and the primitive pattern of faith and practice than any other Church, we cannot deny, if we would, that what we are as a Church to-day was the work of the Protestant Reformers. To these noble, holy and learned men, even if they were erring, who shed their blood to purchase with it for us the priceless heritage of a pure faith enshrined in a form of worship that is sublime in its dignity, venerable for its antiquity, and glorious with the beauty of holiness, we owe a debt which we cannot over-estimate, a debt which it were the climax of base ingratitude for us to repay, as some who call themselves Anglican Churchmen have done, by casting opprobrium upon their blessed memory."

7 THE SPLENDID HERITAGE—BIBLE—BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER—THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES.

"The heritage they have bequeathed to us is indeed a rich one—a faithful version of the Holy Scriptures in our

own tongue, that the unlearned may have free access to the Words of Life and 'the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other rights and ceremonies of the Church.' The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, forming a complete summary of the Reformed faith on the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, and especially on those points which were matters of controversy with the Church of Rome, although of somewhat inferior authority, we acknowledge as the standard of reference for the Church's teaching and subscribe 'in their true, literal and usual meaning, not drawing them aside any way nor putting our own sense or comment to be their meaning, but taking them in the literal and grammatical sense.'

"We are all agreed in the recognition of these three great standards as the tests to which we are willing that our Churchmanship should be brought. The first, the Bible, if we believe in its divine inspiration, must ever be to us the supreme, sole, final appeal in matters of faith and practice of life, so that in the words of the Sixth Article, 'Whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.'"

8.—AN EVANGELICAL PRAYER BOOK CHURCHMAN WHO PREACHES THE GOSPEL.

"And herein I profess my, unfeigned assent and consent to its teaching as thoroughly scriptural; my deep love and reverence for its form of sound words as those in which my fathers have found spiritual comfort in worshipping for three hundred years; and my unswerving allegiance to its authority as the exponent of the Reformers' doctrine. I claim that in avowing myself a Prayer Book Churchman I vindicate my title to be held a Protestant Churchman; for the Prayer Book is, as I regard it, the very bulwark of Protestant principles.

"I have laid claim to the further character of being an Evangelical Churchman. It is much to be regretted that so unexceptionable a definition should have been narrowed down to the designation of a party. I hold that the chief glory, the very *raison d'être* of the Reformed Church of Eng-

land, is that she is an Evangelical Church. The very purpose of her purgation from Romish traditions was that she might be the depository and dispenser of the pure, unadulterated Gospel of Christ. It is the accord of her teaching, her formularies, her rites, her Prayer Book, with that Gospel as revealed in Holy Scripture that constitutes their claim upon our acceptance. I know of no duty which our Church lays upon her ordained Ministers paramount to that of fulfilling her Lord's commission to preach the Gospel to every creature, of none she enjoins upon her children other than in all things to obey the Gospel of Christ their Saviour.

"It shall be my one aim in all my ministrations, as it has been in the past, to know nothing in my preaching but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, to set forth sacraments, ordinances, creeds and ceremonies, not in the place of the Gospel, but as means to bring men nearer to Christ and Christ nearer to men. This is what I understand by being an Evangelical Churchman, to be thoroughly loyal to the Church from a conviction that she is based upon the Gospel as her authority, pervaded by the Gospel as her Spirit and conformed to the Gospel in her teaching."

**9.—AN EVANGELICAL PRAYER BOOK CHURCHMAN,
GLADLY ACCEPTING THE WORK OF THE RE-
FORMERS AS IT STANDS.**

"A sound, conservative Churchman, conservative of the Evangelical doctrine and Apostolic order as they have been bequeathed us by the Reformers, is what I aim to be, for I am one of those who are satisfied with what the Reformers have done, regretting nothing which they have abolished; and not wishing to see anything abolished which they have thought worthy to be retained."

**10.—THE LAITY ARE STAUNCHLY PROTESTANT
AND MUST HAVE CLERGYMEN OF SOUND
PROTESTANT VIEWS.**

"If any apology is needed from me for trespassing at such length upon your time and in such plain simplicity of language, with what may be called my Declaration of Faith,

I find it in the present condition of our Church in this Diocese, which must be to all of us matter of deep distress and concern. It is useless for us, through feelings of false delicacy, to attempt to conceal from ourselves the fact that there are a large number of our country missions in which the Church is dying out, and that there has been a holding back of the means which are necessary to the support and extension of our missions, and that both these symptoms of declining prosperity are, to a large extent, attributable to a want of sympathy and confidence on the part of the Laity in the teaching of the Clergy. I fully recognize that, in the administration of the Diocese, the task to which I have to address myself is to endeavour to restore this lost confidence. Without it it is impossible that we can regain a state of strength, vitality and progress.

“There can be no question in the mind of anyone acquainted with the religious aspect of the country, that the heart of the great bulk of our Laity is staunchly, jealously Protestant. I thank God for it. And in the endeavour to fulfil the difficult task that lies before me, my first and most earnest efforts will be directed to supply the missions of the Diocese with Clergymen of sound Protestant views.”

11.—HABITUAL CONFESSION AN ERRONEOUS AND STRANGE DOCTRINE FOREIGN TO THE TEACHING OF OUR CHURCH.

“Among such erroneous and strange doctrines, which have unhappily found their way into our Church, but are wholly foreign to her teaching, are notably those of habitual confession and Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the consecrated elements. On the first of these the Bishops of our Church have pronounced with the consensus of unqualified condemnation. The very limited time at my disposal forbids my entering at any length upon this or any other of the important questions which agitate the Church. I would say, briefly, that the claim which has been put forward by some Presbyters to a right to demand and receive the confession of penitents before giving them absolution, indicates and would seem to spring from exaggerated views of Priestly authority which are alien to the whole spirit of our Church’s teaching, have no warrant whatever in the

Word of God and are justly regarded by Protestants as the reproach of the Church of Rome.

“The instructions given in our Prayer Book to the Clergy as to receiving voluntary confessions, are very slight. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in his primary charge as Bishop of London, remarks, ‘The silence of the Church of England formularies as compared with the fulness of the Church of Rome in treating of systematic confession, is itself, to my mind, an irrefragable argument to show that the mind of our Church is quite against the practice.’

“The progress of our Reformers’ views on this subject may be traced by comparing the Second Prayer Book of King Edward Sixth, in 1552, with the First Book of 1549. The Rubric in the visitation for the sick in the first book stood thus:

“ ‘Here shall the sick person make a special confession, if he feels his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the Priest shall absolve him after this form; and the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confessions.’ In the second book this last clause, ‘the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confessions,’ was expunged; thus clearly taking away the authority for using a form of private confession. Again, at this same revision, in the Communion office, the passage was struck out from the address to the Communicants, ‘Requiring such as shall be satisfied with the general confession not to be offended with them that do use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the Priest.’ Here is another unmistakable indication of the intention of our Reformers to abolish private confession from the Church system.

“The three passages in the Book of Common Prayer which bear upon this subject are: First, the exhortation which calls upon us to confess our manifold sins and wickedness, with a humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart, and that, not only at all times in humble acknowledgment before God, but most chiefly in our daily assembling together in public, before we receive comfort from hearing the declaration, which the Minister is authorised to pronounce, of God’s willingness to pardon and absolve all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His Holy

Gospel Second, the invitation which concludes the first form of warning for the celebration of the Holy Communion, 'Because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you, who by this means (i.e., confession to God, repentance and restitution) cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.' The third passage I have already quoted from the order for the visitation of the sick, wherein the Pastor is directed to move the sick person to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, 'that if he seems truly penitent he may have the consolation of hearing from his Pastor's lips before he dies that God of His great mercy in Jesus Christ is ready to pardon him.'

"The first of these passages enjoining the confession of sins publicly before the congregation gives no countenance whatever to the practice of the confessional, and as to the other two, it is sufficient to point out that they plainly, in their honest interpretation, have reference solely to the ordinary pastoral intercourse of the Clergyman with his people. This intercourse should be of the most sacred character, dealing with the spiritual condition of those entrusted to his care, as well the sick as the whole, as need shall require and occasion shall be given. It is to be feared that we are not generally faithful enough to our duty and our opportunities in this respect; a good deal of plain speaking, admonition, remonstrance, searching into the state of the heart, is, no doubt, necessary on the Pastor's part, if he would lead his people individually to repentance and the seeking of God's pardoning mercy; but this is a very different thing from what some have attempted to introduce into our system as habitual confession to the Priest."

12.—HABITUAL CONFESSION IS AN OUTRAGE TO OUR CHURCH TO BE LOATHED BY PURE- MINDED PEOPLE.

“I will not dwell upon the moral and social aspect of this question; the terrible scandals, the injury to morality, the mischief in families which have resulted from this practice as carried to its ultimate issues in the Church of Rome, and have made the very name of the confessional to be indignantly spurned and loathed by every pure-minded, independent man; what I insist upon is that it is an outrage to the Reformed principles of our Church, a practice that cannot be tolerated with any sanction from her authority. I close this subject with another quotation from the Charge of Bishop Tait in 1858: ‘If,’ he says, ‘any Clergyman so preaches to his people as to lead them to suppose that the proper and authorized way of a sinner’s reconciliation with God is through confession to a Priest and by receiving Priestly absolution—if he leads them to believe that as the Greek Church has erred by neglecting preaching, and the Church of Rome by not encouraging the reading of the Scriptures, so our Church has hitherto been much to blame for not leading her people more habitually to private, auricular confession—if he thus stirs up the imagination of ardent and confiding spirits to have recourse to him as a mediator between their souls and God, and when they come to seek his aid receives them with all the elaborate preparation which is so likely unduly to excite their feelings, and for which there is no authority in the Church’s rules of worship—taking them into the vestry of his church, securing the door, putting on the sacred vestments, causing them to kneel before the Cross, to address him as their ghostly father, asking a string of questions as to sins of deed, word and thought, and imposing his penance before he confers absolution—then the man who thus acts, or—even if some of these particular circumstances are wanting—of whose general practice this is no exaggerated picture, is, in my judgment, unfaithful to the whole spirit of the Church of which he is a member.’ ”

13.—THE REAL PRESENCE IS ALSO AN ERRONEOUS AND STRANGE DOCTRINE FOREIGN TO THE TEACHING OF OUR CHURCH.

“With regard to the other ‘strange and erroneous doctrine,’ which I have here instanced—that of the Real Presence—we cannot but remember that in its extremest form, as Transubstantiation, it formed the chief point of issue with the Church of Rome, the centre around which the strife raged the fiercest, the crucial test which cost many faithful and true men their lives. Probably no member of the Church of England, however extreme his Sacramentarian views, holds this doctrine, in its full import, and undisguised repugnance; no Anglican Priest would venture to assert it openly, in defiance of Article Twenty-eight, which declares, ‘The Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner.’ ‘And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.’ But there is a manner of speaking of the mystery of the spiritual Presence of Christ, in and under the outward symbols, and of the effects which follow the act of consecration, which tends to inculcate views of the Holy Sacrament, very closely approaching those which this Article strongly condemns. For example, in the Manual of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament I find such language as this, ‘O my beloved Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, I firmly believe, because Thou hast said, “this is My Body; this is My Blood,” that in this Blessed Sacrament Thou art truly present, Thy Divinity and Thy Humanity, with all the treasures of Thy merits and Thy grace; that Thou art Thyself mystically offered for us in this Holy Oblation; and dost through Thy Own Presence communicate the virtues of Thy most precious Death and Passion to all Thy faithful living and departed.’ And again, ‘I adore Thee, O Lord my God, whom I now behold, veiled beneath these earthly forms. Prostrate I adore Thy Majesty.’ In the ‘Litany of our Lord present in the Holy Eucharist’ in the same Manual, amongst many like allusions to a corporeal Presence, occurs this suffrage, which seems to symbolize with the heresy of the sacrifice of the Mass, ‘That by this adorable sacrifice we may acknowledge our perpetual dependence upon Thee’; and again in the

‘Litany of Reparation,’ ‘O Sacred Victim, consumed on the Altar by us and for us; have mercy upon us.’ Once more, in the ‘Office for Spiritual Communion,’ the direction is given, ‘Here meditate devoutly on the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ; or on the Real Presence of His Sacred Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, or on the Holy Sacrifice of Himself therein continually offered before the Father.’ It is, of course, possible, by the exercise of an extreme charity, to believe that persons who hold such language may persuade themselves, by some ingenuity of reasoning, that they mean nothing more than is taught by our Church; but it seems to me that no plain, simple folk could understand from it anything else than the assertion of the bodily presence of the crucified Christ, in the consecrated Bread and Wine, and of the repetition in every act of communion of that atoning sacrifice of Himself, which Scripture tells us was made once for all.”

14.—THE PRACTICES, ATTITUDES AND GESTURES WHICH TEACH THE DOCTRINE OF THE REAL PRESENCE CONSIDERED.

“But it is not teaching only that may suggest this doctrine of the Real Presence—there is a serious danger of leading unstable minds into the same error, by the practices, the attitudes and gestures which have been introduced into the act of communion. Those who, no doubt from a sense of deep reverence, have adopted the practices I refer to, verge very closely upon the violation of the last clause of the Article already quoted: ‘The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was not by Christ’s ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up or worshipped.’ The consecration of the elements, with the celebrant’s back turned to the people so that they are unable to see what is done, the elevation of the consecrated Bread above his head, the prostration of the communicant before the Holy table, the receiving of the elements with every manifestation of a profound obeisance to them as possessing an imparted virtue by the act of consecration, and non-communicating attendance—all these practices, neither enjoined in nor deducible from the Rubrics, have the semblance of a superstitious adoration of the sacred symbols.

They may be innocent in intent, but their danger is lest they lead on the worshipper from step to step to the fatal error of believing that by virtue of the Priest's act the very Body and Blood of Christ are offered up afresh on the Altar, an oft-repeated sacrifice for sin.

"You will remember how careful the Church has been to guard the reverential posture she enjoins on recipients against this misconstruction. At the first revision of the Prayer Book in 1552 the Royal Council added a declaration concerning kneeling at the communion, which, having been omitted since the reign of Elizabeth, was again subjoined, with certain modifications, in its present form, at the last revision in 1661. 'It is hereby declared, that hereby no adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental Bread or Wine there bodily received, or unto any corporal Presence of Christ's natural Flesh and Blood. For the Sacramental Bread and Wine remains still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored, for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians.'

"By all means let us inculcate upon our communicants, both in precept and by example, the utmost devotion of heart and reverence of demeanor in approaching these Holy mysteries; in drawing nearer to the Spiritual Presence of our adorable Saviour than in any other ordinance; but, as we love the Truth, let us shun everything that savours of or conduces to superstition."

15.—CLERGYMEN IN SUCH A CONSPIRACY TO UNDERMINE OUR REFORMED CHURCH WILL NOT BE LICENSED.

"So utterly subversive of the Protestant doctrine of our Church on a matter of vital importance do I consider such teaching, that I will never knowingly grant my license to officiate in this Diocese to any Clergyman who is a member of this Confraternity—or conspiracy, as it has been called—to undermine our Reformed Faith. And I earnestly hope that in preaching or teaching concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper our Clergy will carefully guard against all such language as may give colour to a belief that is so repugnant to the spirit and teaching of the Church."

**16.—THE RULE IN ‘RITUAL’ IS ‘THAT WHICH IS
GOOD FOR THE USE OF EDIFYING.’**

“I could have wished, had space permitted, to address you fully on the subject of Ritualism. For the present but a few words will suffice. Our Church is distinguished above other Reformed Churches in possessing a Ritual which is essentially grand, decorous and beautiful, and has throughout her history not thought it unworthy to call into her aid the hand-made arts of music, architecture and decoration, to render her services of prayer and praise, at once promotive of devotional feeling in the worshipper and becoming the glory and majesty of Him worshipped. For my part, I should grieve to see our beautiful Liturgy robbed of all that makes it impressive as the service of the sanctuary, and reduced to the barren coldness of a cheerless, Puritan worship. A comely, well-appointed house of prayer, with all the furniture and vessels for the use of God’s service, designed with taste and kept in scrupulous cleanliness and order, good music of a church character, and a hearty, responsive service, I believe to be not only calculated to attract worshippers, but profitable to interest their hearts in the worship. In all these matters the rule should be, ‘that which is good for the use of edifying.’ ”

**17.—THE DIGNITY AND BEAUTY OF SIMPLICITY AS
OPPOSED TO THE TAWDRY TINSEL AND
MIMICRY OF ROME, WHICH DRIVES SO
MANY OUT OF OUR CHURCH.**

“The one only plea for the improving of Ritual must be the promoting of reality, earnestness and spirituality in worship. And of our Reformed Church, as contrasted with idolatrous Rome, the character of her Ritual should be the dignity, genuineness and beauty of simplicity, as opposed to the frivolous, tawdry tinsel of outward pomp and pageant. Simplicity should be the glory of all our services, simplicity that is the natural expression of sincerity—not that bald and dull simplicity which is begotten of indifference and slovenliness. But unhappily some, in their fondness for the externals of religion, or their leanings to symbolism and

æsthetic modes of worship, or their excessive zeal for ceremonial, have far exceeded this rule of simplicity, and by their introduction of excessive decorations, floral and symbolic, continual bowings and genuflections, candles lighted in broad day, peculiar shaped vestments and many-coloured stoles, and otherwise what has been called 'the mimicry of the outside of Rome,' have given serious offence to the sober common sense of their people and aroused suspicions in them that something dangerous lurks behind. Indeed, while these practices find favour with a few of extreme ecclesiastical tastes, it cannot be concealed that they have been the means of alienating the affections of great numbers of the plain, simple people from the Church, and driving them into schism, to join themselves to dissenting communions. 'Why,' it has been asked, 'should any Clergyman wish to make his church such that a common man placed suddenly within would not be able to say whether he was in a Church of England or a Romish place of worship'?

18.—AVOID INNOVATIONS.

"Our Church has provided in her Rubrics a Ritual which gives ample scope for a solemn, beautiful, chaste and hearty service; the vestments sanctioned by long presumptive usage, the decent white surplice with sleeves, the black stole and hood belonging to the degree, furnish a priestly garment sufficiently expressive of the holiness of the office and of a simple dignity and comeliness to satisfy the purest taste; the music that has been created by the Church of England through three hundred years, and is the exponent of the genius of her service, offers a repertoire extensive and varied enough to supply the demands of the most cultivated and critical taste, and possesses compositions of sacred and solemn beauty that have justly made themselves dear to the hearts as well as the ears of Church-going people; and all these may be legitimately made the most of to render the service a real help to the soul's spiritual emotions. Everything beyond these must be regarded in the light of an innovation; and innovations in Ritual and worship it is my duty to set my face against, and as far as my authority extends, to check and resist."

19.—OFFEND NOT OUR BROTHER WITH DECORATIONS.

“With regard to church decorations, which may be innocuous in themselves, I must earnestly warn my younger brethren of the Clergy especially, against pushing them to dangerous extremes. To take one familiar example, the emblem of the Cross, which is unquestionably the most ancient and appropriate of Christian devices—suppose that the use of it is the cause of offence to a weak member of your flock. What is our duty as a Christian man and a Pastor of the flock? To insist upon the ornament as unoffensive and retain it to gratify your taste, and so alienate your brother or wound his weak conscience, or to yield your predilections to his scruples? You admit that no principle is involved; no law of the Church or precept of the Gospel enjoins that crosses should be set up over the holy table or on the wall; and surely the spirit of tender charity that was the rule of the large-hearted Apostle will prompt you to decide, ‘I will set up no cross while I live, lest I make my brother to offend.’ ”

Let us thankfully accept this message as giving us the true position and teaching of our Church. Let us preserve it and use it as a shield of defence against the fiery darts of the Romanists and Anglo-Romanists. It will enable the faithful to give from a high authority—one of the Fathers of our Church—a reason concerning “the hope that is in you”—1 Pet. 3 : 15.

S. H. B.

